

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) In a composite structure comprising at least two coupled structures, wherein each of the at least two coupled structures comprises a plurality of pairs of scissors-connected tubular elements having extremities hinged in universal joints, said universal joints being integral delimited by substantially equal and parallel faces and forming four seats, each of the four seats in correspondence with a side face to accept hinged elements, the improvement comprising:

each of said universal joints including a groove along each side of a larger face forming the four seats, said groove proximate to and parallel to a corresponding edge of each said side face; and

a C-sectioned fixing element including two folded and inverted edges; the C-sectioned fixing element holding united two matching said universal joints such that the larger face of one of the two matching said universal joints is disposed in a direction opposite the larger face of the other of the two matching said universal joints, wherein one of the folded and inverted edges is inserted into one groove of one of the two matching said universal joints and the other of the folded and inverted edges is inserted into one groove of the other of the two

matching said universal joints to snap the C-sectioned fixing element to the two matching said universal joints.

2. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 1, wherein the at least two coupled structures are superimposed and each includes, in an inside surface of the larger face of the universal joint having said four seats, a fifth seat in which is fixed an extremity of an extendible telescopic tubular element whose other extremity is fixed to an opposed universal joint.

3. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 1, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element includes a substantially rectangular sheet of flexible material.

Claim 4 (Canceled).

5. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 1, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element is applied only over each external side face of the universal joints that are on an external surface of the structure.

Serial No.: 09/913,995

6. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 1, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element covers a substantial portion of a corresponding side face of superimposed universal joints and includes cut-outs corresponding to the seats for the hinged extended elements.

7. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 1, wherein matching faces of the universal joints of the coupled structures include at least one suitable perforation for housing a pivot that prevents any horizontal movement of the universal joints.

Claims 8 and 9 (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 2, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element includes a substantially rectangular sheet of flexible material.

Claim 11 (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to
Claim 10, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element is applied only over each external
side face of the universal joints that are on an external surface of the structure.

13. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to
Claim 2, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element is applied only over each external
side face of the universal joints that are on an external surface of the structure.

14. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to
Claim 10, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element covers a substantial portion of a
corresponding side face of superimposed universal joints and includes cut-outs
corresponding to the seats for the hinged extended elements.

15. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to
Claim 2, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element covers a substantial portion of a
corresponding side face of superimposed universal joints and includes cut-outs
corresponding to the seats for the hinged extended elements.

16. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 14, wherein matching faces of the universal joints of the coupled structures include at least one suitable perforation for housing a pivot that prevents any horizontal movement of the universal joints.

17. (Previously Presented) A composite structure according to Claim 15, wherein matching faces of the universal joints of the coupled structures include at least one suitable perforation for housing a pivot that prevents any horizontal movement of the universal joints.

18. (Previously Presented) A composite structure including at least two coupled structures, comprising:

each coupled structure including a plurality of pairs of scissors-connected tubular elements having extremities hinged in universal joints, each extremity hinged in one of a plurality of seats of each universal joint;

each of the universal joints including a larger face and a plurality of side faces, and each of the plurality of seats formed in the larger face and one of the side faces; and

a C-sectioned fixing element including two folded and inverted edges;

each of the universal joints including a plurality of grooves in the larger face, each of the plurality of grooves proximate to and parallel to an edge of the larger face along one of the plurality of side faces, each of the plurality of grooves adapted to cooperate with one of the two folded and inverted edges of the C-sectioned fixing element;

wherein each of the two folded and inverted edges of the C-sectioned fixing element snaps into a groove of one of two oppositely facing larger faces of two matched universal joints to hold united the two matched universal joints.

19. (Previously Presented) The composite structure of Claim 18, further comprising an opening in an inside surface of the larger face in which is fixed an extremity of an extendible telescopic tubular element whose other extremity is fixed to an opposed universal joint.

20. (Previously Presented) The composite structure of Claim 18, further comprising matching faces of the universal joints including at least one opening for housing a pivot that prevents any horizontal movement between the two matched universal joints.

21. (Previously Presented) The composite structure of Claim 18, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element covers a substantial portion of the corresponding side faces of matched universal joints, the C-sectioned fixing element including cut-outs corresponding to the seats.

22. (Previously Presented) The composite structure of Claim 18, wherein the C-sectioned fixing element is applied only over each side face of the universal joints that are on an external surface of the structure.

23. (Currently Amended) In a composite structure comprising at least two coupled structures, wherein each of the at least two coupled structures comprises a plurality of pairs of scissors-connected tubular elements having extremities hinged in universal joints, said universal joints being integral delimited by substantially equal and parallel faces and forming four seats, each of the four seats in correspondence with a side face to accept hinged elements, the improvement consisting of:

each of said universal joints including a groove along each side of a larger face forming the four seats, said groove proximate to and parallel to a corresponding edge of each said side face; [[and]]

Serial No.: 09/913,995

a plurality of C-sectioned fixing elements including two folded and inverted edges; and

a pivot between matching faces of the universal joints to prevent any horizontal movement of the universal joints;

each of the C-sectioned fixing elements holding united two matching said universal joints such that the larger face of one of the two matching said universal joints is disposed in a direction opposite the larger face of the other of the two matching said universal joints, wherein one of the folded and inverted edges is inserted into one groove of one of the two matching said universal joints and the other of the folded and inverted edges is inserted into one groove of the other of the two matching said universal joints to snap the C-sectioned fixing element to the two matching said universal joints.